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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Extension Service  
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\* A SUSTAINED 4-H EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM \*

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Conference of State 4-H Club Leaders  
National 4-H Club Camp  
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The influence of 4-H Club work on young people is truly great. That is because the ideals and philosophy back of this so important extension activity are high and withal sound and practical. Moreover, the educational methods employed, long tested with the 14 million or more boys and girls involved, are fundamentally correct. As a result, 4-H work has won high esteem in educational circles, as well as popular appreciation.

"4-H Club work can be the greatest youth organization in the country," said Barry Wall, editor of the Farmville (Va.) Herald. He also said, "It is a design for living. It is a useful, instructive program related in an intensely practical way to the life of its members. 4-H members make play out of their work, but together they build for a greater farm industry in the Nation, an industry that will become progressively greater because of the intelligence and the study that is being applied in the development of a program."

This makes sweet music. Such statements are most satisfying to you and to the many extension workers and volunteer leaders who are working so devotedly to make 4-H work even better. Yet you all realize that there are still big jobs ahead. True 4-H Club work has grown immeasurably in purpose, breadth, method, and influence. In most States there has been a fairly steady growth in the number of boys and girls enrolled. Today, we claim some 1,700,000 4-H Club members. But the Census tells us that there are over 13 million boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 20 in the rural areas alone. Two of our record States, Alabama and Mississippi, have 1 out of every 4 eligibles enrolled. Oregon leads the parade in the North with 1 out of every 5 enrolled. But there are States, North and South, which have only 1 out of every 12 eligibles enrolled. More startling is the fact that there is one State with only 1 of 45, another with only 1 out of every 36 enrolled in 1945. We have one State which registers 358 club members per county extension worker. At the other end there is a State with only 38 members per extension worker.

Then we all realize that there are many thousand boys and girls enrolled who remain as participants for only too short a time. But Dr. Shinn, who so kindly supplied the data cited, points out that there have been some commendable gains. In 1945, nearly 10 percent had been enrolled 4 years, as against 7 percent in 1930. Again in 1945, about  $20\frac{1}{2}$  percent were enrolled in the 4 - 5 - 6 year groups, as contrasted with only 12 percent in 1930. Congratulations to you are in order.

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You realize also that there is a host of young people above club age who are not reached through extension work of any kind. The postwar years are bringing tremendous changes in national and international affairs which greatly affect agriculture and country life. Certainly it does seem that everything possible should be done to help the young people of today to better adjust themselves to the problems and tempo of the times. There is great need for developing extension programs to reach all rural young people and perhaps more of the urban young people.

First of all, we must have a far larger club enrollment. The national committee of State club leaders responsible for developing the 10 Guideposts realized that when they set the goal of 3,200,000 club members by 1950. So did the national subcommittee and the Committee on Extension Organization and Policy when they approved this goal. This goal can be reached and even exceeded. But you and all of us in Extension will have to hustle. We can't keep on saying "It can't be done," as some still say. Extension funds and personnel during the last 2 years have increased far beyond the fondest dreams of some of us. Today we have nearly 11,000 paid workers. As of March 31, 1947, our records show 2,932 county agricultural agents, 1,474 assistants; 2,194 county home demonstration agents, 517 assistants; 428 county club agents, 77 assistants; 737 Negro men and women agents. Surely with this great force helping us we should reach the goal set.

Of course, there will have to be some changes in the methods of organizing and carrying on club work as well as in methods of obtaining enrollment. A hurry-up, sign 'em up on the dotted line, short-time, rapid-fire campaign won't do the job. Nor will it make for longer time participation in club work of many who might enroll. A sustained educational campaign, not merely more publicity, is called for. Such a program would be organized and conducted to bring about a much wider and greater understanding on the part of the general public of the objectives, programs, and methods of 4-H Club work and the place the work holds in the extension organization and program. But above all, this educational work must be directed especially to reach parents of boys and girls of club age, as well as the youngsters themselves, to bring about a sympathetic knowledge and understanding of 4-H work on their part. The program, or campaign, should also be pointed to attract more volunteers to serve as local leaders, for we shall have to double the number now helping so generously. All available resources of personnel and extension means and devices must be employed. Moreover, the ingenuity of extension editors and all extension workers should be drawn on to create new agencies and devices. It must be emphasized that the educational campaign should extend, with a continuous flow of educational and informational material, over a period of 4 to 5 months before any extensive membership enrollment is attempted.

In seeking a larger enrollment, in aiming to expose more young people and parents to 4-H ideals and work, we need to go beyond the strictly farm or rural groups. The time is ripe for entering towns and even larger urban areas to develop a wider appreciation of the values that come with 4-H membership and definitely organize 4-H Clubs in such communities. As

a matter of fact Extension generally is already working with  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million suburban and urban families. We can look forward to having some assistant extension agents employed for this program. Indeed, the Oregon Legislature recently passed a law which permits towns and cities with more than 8,000 people to appropriate funds for the employment of a club agent or a home demonstration agent, or both, in cooperation with the State extension service. This type of work would necessitate new methods, new projects, varied kinds of organization to be sure. But the need is there, and also a fine opportunity for greater service.

### I. Planning the Campaign.

How shall we plan the educational program? When the Department plans an educational program, one of the first requirements is to develop a campaign outline to guide State and county people in planning the campaign locally. This outline includes a statement of the problems to be met, a background statement, a fact sheet, and detailed suggestions for organizing the people who will cooperate. Full suggestions for the use of a chain of means and devices to interest and influence people likewise are included. I think every State would profit if it adopted this same idea. Such a guide would be of inestimable value to all extension people and to all the volunteer forces enlisted to help with the job.

How shall we begin? First, of all, the State club leaders and their assistants should join with the extension editors and the other State leaders of county extension agents in preparing an over-all statement or fact sheet. This should include:

1. History and present status of 4-H Club work, including enrollment by counties, number of eligible boys and girls, leaders, personnel, funds available, types of work and projects, principal activities and features and program.
2. The need for better education of adults and young people in 4-H philosophy, methods, organization, and work.
3. What are the new objectives, including a statement of the significance of the 10 Guideposts.
4. Quotas and goals for the counties and State.
5. A general outline of the campaign plan of work and calendar.

This statement may need to be amended for inclusion in the finished guide as we develop the steps immediately below and benefit by the suggestions received.

6. The State leaders should meet with the director and the central staff to discuss the points in the over-all statement and the general program and plan for the State, making such changes as the group agrees upon.

7. Now the State leaders should meet with the director to consider needed increase in personnel and funds, the assignment of responsibilities to other central staff members, and the part county extension agents will play.

These two steps are essential. They are your big opportunities to present a detailed, clear-cut program to the director and his staff, and to gain their active support for your enlarged and intensive program. Without these, you won't get very far. This chance to sell your program must be most carefully worked out.

8. After general approval is obtained, the State leaders should meet with the extension editors and radio director to outline a State-wide plan of information service, and to select and plan for the development and use of a wide assortment of extension means and agencies, both State-wide and locally. These, with illustrations and with full discussion of how they may be adapted and used locally, make up a large part of the campaign guide.
9. Preliminary to launching the campaign some briefing of extension agents needs to be done. The responsibility of every extension agent with respect to club work should be clearly set forth by the extension director. Especially do the newly employed county and assistant agents have to be trained and directed not only with regard to the campaign but emphatically so with regard to organizing and carrying on 4-H Club work with full effectiveness. Therefore, district conferences of county extension agents should be staged. Here all supervisors will join in instructing the agents in the fact sheet, the campaign plan, the use of local leaders, and the organization and operation of 4-H Clubs.

## II. What services and devices shall we use?

Our studies show that of every 100 persons adopting better practices 38 said this was due to popularized scientific information read, seen or heard in bulletins, newspapers, on the radio, or in other mass media. As the number of different types of contacts increased from 1 to 9, the number of families changing behavior increased from 35 to 98 percent. So, in planning a campaign, we must consider two basic principles: First--to have a wide variety of educational means and agencies. Second--to employ these so that there is a more or less continuous flow of influence over an extended period. The influences must inform. But more than that, they must lead to action by convincing readers and listeners that they present solutions and satisfactions to the individual's felt desires. Too often, in Extension, we use too small a chain of influences, or use devices that show too little originality or suitability. But the list is increasing. Circular letters, charts, posters, graphs, motion pictures, exhibits, slides and slidefilms, circulars, magazine articles, radio, news items, stickers, window displays, contests, slogans, talks, and discussion groups are a few now more commonly used. Mass media, as pointed out by our Mr. Schlup, are inexpensive and can be made highly effective, especially with persons not reached through the direct methods of teaching individuals and groups.

Let me outline a modification of the plan I discussed with the State club leaders at the Club Congress last year. This can be adapted for use in the State guide which I hope you will complete. It is pitched to the county level.

1. Conference of county and local club leaders, representatives of business and women's clubs, home demonstration groups or clubs, schools, PTA, churches, fair and agricultural associations, to discuss status and the need for a sustained educational program, fact sheet, recommendations from the State level, and the general plan of attack.
2. Organization by such a group of a county committee to consider recommendations and develop complete plan of work with extension agents.
3. Local news notes on results of the foregoing steps 1 and 2, including make-up of committee and general plans.
4. Agents organize complete mailing list with help of local leaders as follows:
  - a. Parents of 10-21-year-olds on farms and in rural towns.
  - b. 10-21-year olds. on farms and in rural towns.
  - c. Former club members.
  - d. Local and neighborhood leaders.
  - e. Officers of business and women's clubs, home demonstration groups, farm organizations, business houses, banks, schools, and ministers.
5. County and local meetings of present and newly recruited leaders to consider plan and organize and train for program.
6. News items covering meetings and giving names and location.
7. Circular letter with circular on 4-H Club work, outlining overall statement and general plan of program. To all lists.
8. Survey of all 10-21-year-olds and parents to find answers to 10 to 12 questions bearing on situations and interests of former club members as well as potential new members. Survey made by local and neighborhood leaders.
9. News stories preceding and following above.
10. News stories outlining objectives and general plans of program.
11. News stories of success stories of 4-H Club members.
12. News stories and circular letters announcing local meetings of parents and young people to discuss purposes, requirements, and procedures in 4-H Club work.

13. Local meetings with discussions by local leaders, club members, and extension agents.
14. News stories covering results of these meetings.
15. County-seat meeting of businessmen leaders and prominent farm leaders to outline sustained program and obtain their active support.
16. News notes concerning high points of the meeting.
17. Slogan or essay contest.
18. 4-H Club stickers on mail of all extension agents, creameries, business houses, and the like.
19. 4-H Club demonstration meetings attended by parents, nonclub members, and others.
20. Meeting of county committee to review progress to date and perfect plans for obtaining enrollment.
21. Selection and organization and briefing of teams to visit homes and schools to obtain enrollment.
22. News items about teams.
23. Exhibits of 4-H Club work in local stores.
24. Movie announcements and 3-minute talks on 4-H Club work and how to join.
25. Circular letter to parents and 10-21-year-olds with enrollment card.
26. News notes on progress of enrollment.
27. Review of enrollment obtained and then house-to-house canvass by teams where no enrollment has been given.
28. County committee meets with extension agents and local and neighborhood leaders at county dinner to appraise results and outline location and leadership organization of local clubs.
29. Organization of clubs and planning the development of their work.
30. Full news stories on steps 28 and 29.

After this stage has been reached similar detailed proceedings should be worked out for the entire year to keep constantly before parents, the nonclub members, the schools, business and women's clubs, and the public generally the work and progress of 4-H Clubs in the county.

I have had so much experience with detailed planning of this kind that I can say to you it works if you follow it faithfully and do not cut too many corners. Try it. I think too often we have too many gaps between a few widely spaced high points or features in our educational procedure. We should plan a more continuous flow of media that inform and lead to action.

### III. Some other opportunities.

Although there are some 300,000 boys and girls over 15 in club work, the problem of holding boys and girls longer in club work is a long-standing one. State leaders have given this much attention. Some meet it by organizing clubs for different age groups. Some seek an answer in organizing agricultural and home economics projects of a caliber to challenge the ambition, skills, ingenuity, and stick-to-it-iveness of the older boy and girl. Here we have a real opportunity for the State leaders, specialists, and county extension agents, as well as local leaders, to offer club members a much wider variety of so-called projects. Our 4-H supervisors, our club agents, and our local leaders all need more technical training in agriculture and homemaking. Then they can better see State and local needs and problems, help boys and girls work with such problems, and offer more than the usual run of projects. Other good suggestions may be found in the recent, most excellent special 4-H circular No. 9, published jointly by the extension services of the six New England States. This is called "Keeping High School Youth in 4-H Clubs." It is based on a very careful survey of 642 young people, parents, and local leaders. Another excellent guide is Miss Warren's circular "Review of the 4-H Homemaking Club Program."

Now, I think the 4-H Club leaders ought to be encouraged to try to attack other phases of the problem of reaching all young people through extension work. These I will only touch on. The whole field of working with young people between the ages of 10 years and say, 30 years is wide open. You can make it yours if you will exert your leadership. You have the know-how of working with young people. You are interested in their problems. You can do much in developing skills, knowledge, appreciation, to better fit the coming generation to build a richer, more satisfying country life. The need is there. Opportunity calls.

A comprehensive extension program for young people must include some extension effort with boys and girls of club age, whether or not they subsequently enroll as 4-H members. They could be reached through meetings, talks at school, circulars, circular letters, farm press, and news information generally in much the same way as in extension work with adults. The great developments in agricultural and home economics science should be made more interesting and vital to these young people.

Agricultural and homemaking subjects do have cultural as well as vocational values. To be sure, the county extension agents need first to have a mailing list of all boys and girls of club age. Later a special mailing list could be made of all young people in the club age group not enrolled in club work.

We may ask also whether Extension does not have a responsibility to help rural young people who do not wish to stay on farms. It does seem that we could help many, especially those under 21, to find themselves, to measure their abilities and desires, and to select a life's vocation and prepare themselves for it. We can help them understand what specific vocations require in the way of preparation, what desirable and undesirable features mark certain occupations, what requirements must be met, and what opportunities exist.

There are numbers of young unmarried people in many counties who may be preparing for farming and homemaking who would benefit from the helps Extension might give them. Should they be induced to swell the ranks of the so-called older-youth clubs, now numbering some 65,000 members? Or has Extension a teaching responsibility to see that these young people get all the help available on farming and homemaking whether they belong to a formally organized group or not? There are an opportunity and a challenge here. With a little direct effort on the part of Extension, many of this group of young people would be given inspiration, new insights, and valuable knowledge to better prepare them for rural occupation and citizenship.

A similar need and opportunity are afforded by the young married people. They do not usually join with existing extension groups or clubs of older people. Perhaps because they are just starting out they do not have time to attend group meetings. Perhaps they feel diffident in mingling with groups of older people. But they can be reached by meetings, circulars, letter or group meetings of their kind. Certainly, because they are beginners they stand in need of information and help on farming and homemaking problems.

Withal, through meetings, discussion groups or organized clubs, supplemented by other extension means and agencies, we can help many more young people develop wider knowledge and appreciation of situations and problems which lie outside of vocational preparation. Included would be health, social welfare, economics, community improvement, government, national and international policies, political science, cultural appreciation, and recreation. With such a program comes the problem of knowing when formal organization of young people is needed and what type is best for special purposes. Then we need to help the young people find and train leadership and how to build and carry on with their organization.

In summary, there is need for a much enlarged extension program with young people. These needs present many opportunities for greater service. Included would be:

1. Increased 4-H Club enrollment, with a goal of at least 3,200,000 by 1950.
2. Giving boys and girls of club age information and interest in agricultural and homemaking topics whether or not they subsequently enroll in 4-H Club work.
3. Helping boys and girls of club age who do not wish to stay on farms choose and prepare for a life's vocation.
4. Helping young unmarried people to better understand agricultural and homemaking problems and prepare to meet them.
5. A more special effort to help young married people who have started farming and homemaking.
6. Help organize groups of young people above club age where needed.
7. Through club discussion groups or by more general means help young people develop wider knowledge and appreciation of situations and affairs which lie outside of vocational preparation.

This reads like a big program. It is. But some of you are already blazing trails in these larger fields. A lot of new hard work is involved. But you never stopped at that. I have the utmost faith that you will win new victories, new satisfaction in launching out in a great new era of work and success with young people. More power to you and all good luck.

